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[Mike](#)

### [Another analogy: Artwork vs. doodles?](#)

You may have seen my [guest essay](#), in which I did some flogging on blogging and wrogging, in the op-ed section of the *Democrat and Chronicle* on March 27.

If you've been following the discussion here the past couple weeks—particularly the one surrounding my [March 17 post](#), “Writing vs. blogging: Why they're not the same thing”—it's easy to discern the inspiration for my *D&C* essay, where I advocated for higher-quality writing on blogs (and introduced a new word—wrogging—that was originally coined on this blog).

Here are some follow-up remarks on the topic:

From [Joy Bennett](#), who writes the [Pittsford blog](#) for the *Democrat and Chronicle*:

“I heartily agree with you about the sloppy nature of many blogs. . . . I strive to always use good writing technique.”

From Bruce Musgrave, my ninth-grade English teacher at Brighton High School (in whose class I not only learned about good writing, but also realized—perhaps for the first time—that I could write well); Bruce offers a particularly apt writing-blogging analogy:

“I really liked your piece on blogs, and especially the notions on the abuses of brain-dumping and your coinage of wrogging. Another analogy springs to mind for me—doodling versus careful drawing. I think I want to see the doodling of only someone like Picasso.”

From “CBS Evening News” and “Face the Nation” anchor Bob Schieffer (whose [remarks](#) I referenced in a [previous post](#)):

“I love it! Wrogging.”

Thanks, also, to many of my RIT colleagues for their comments and compliments about my essay. My graduate adviser, Rudy Pugliese, said it reminded him of the scolding tone of his high school English teachers. (Sorry, Rudy ;~)

Karen Black, director of media relations for NTID, wrote:

“Your editorial is fabulous! Great picture, too! I do hope you're sending your mom at least 10 copies so she can show you off in Florida!”

Thanks, Karen. I'll only add that my mom, at 80 years old, reads her e-mail daily—so I've sent her a link, instead! ;~)

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#### 1. [Mike Saffran](#)

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Least you're led to believe that all feedback was positive, Silandara--seeking to keep me humble and grounded, no doubt--spotted a less-than-favorable remark in the blogosphere. Ironically, however, the sheer inanity of the blogger's post proved my point about “brain dump”--clearly, my remarks struck a sensitive nerve with the obviously offended poster. This much, I hope, is abundantly clear from all of my previous posts here: Whether in support of or in opposition to my remarks, I, of course, favor civil, thoughtful and intelligent discourse (as opposed to uncivil, thoughtless and unintelligent rantings). But, not to worry--my two bosses and our division vice president, along with the president of the university (so I'm told), all liked my essay :-)

#### 2. [Justin Thorp](#)

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First off, Mike we should grab lunch sometime. Drop me an email - jzt1245@rit.edu. I like your editorial BUT I think it fails to recognize that there are different types of blogs all of which serve GREAT value. I write on occasion for a web site called the Godbit Project (<http://www.godbit.com>). For this blog, I am drafting my entries, thinking, writing, rewriting, being careful about grammar, and making sure that I am to the point (all of what you've been talking about.) It is a great site and has a HUGE readership. On my personal blog, Confessions of an Undercover Geek (<http://www.mycapitalweb.com/justin/>), I have never drafted my entries before hand. They are my quick thoughts about whatever is on my mind. I will regularly have "brain dumps." I will check for grammar but I am sure if you looked at the blog you'd find tons of mistakes. I don't let it keep me up at night. My entries are my "doodles." Regardless, on my personal blog, I have been linked to by Om Malik, a Senior Writer from Business 2.0, Robert Scoble, the Microsoft Blogger, Alex Barnett, a high level employee at Microsoft, and many more. In a year and a half I have had almost 10,000 unique page views (not including myself or my parents.) My blog has been successful beyond my wildest dreams. There are also online journals. This is where you tell a story about something that happened to you. In these grammar usually goes out the window. I think they are HUGELY important though. These allow for people with busy lives to stay connected with what is going on with their friends' lives. When you are across the country or even across the world, face to face or phone communications is not always practical. In this blogging form, I don't think grammar is as hugely important because your audience is a fixed set of friends. There are different blogging types, with different audiences, purposes, and requirements of them. I think the type of blogs that represent more of the old media way of writing are great. I think some of these new writing methods are just as revolutionary. Another way of thinking of it, blogging is all about having a conversation. In my day to day face to face conversations, I just put myself out there. You have to formulate arguments and ideas in your head quickly. You don't have the ability to revise your statements after you said them (as much as politicians wish they could. :-) The power of blogging comes from having it be as much like a real life conversation as possible. What if we had a blogging summit at RIT? We could get as many different types of bloggers and writers together. It would allow members of the old media talk to the members of the new media and vice versa. I think there is a lot that we can learn from eachother.

3. [Silandara Bartl](#)

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Hey, I just forwarded what I found - there was no filtering involved. Positive, negative, apathetic, whatever. (I realize that is not a complete sentence, but I'm posting a quick comment, not aiming for a Pulitzer. You've got me all paranoid now, Mike. Or you've turned up the volume my inner critic or something. Argh. Takes all the spontaneity out of it. Probably spelled that wrong, too... :)

4. [Mike Saffran](#)

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I actually cannot find fault with any of your points, Justin. Each of the various forms of blogging serves a purpose of one kind or another. For me, the issue keeps returning to this all-inclusive term, blogging. I actually may be on to something through my admittedly tongue-in-cheek suggestion of a new word, "wrogging." You mentioned online journals. I think it would be great if everyone did the same when referring to them. Perhaps a good analogy: The New York Times National Enquirer. Yes, strictly speaking they're both "newspapers" -- but most comparisons end there (hence, the term "tabloid" for the latter). But, regarding blogs, I know it's still early... (And, yes, we need to have you in for lunch -- on University News, of course -- for your contributions toward enlivening this blog with good conversation.)

5. [Justin Thorp](#)

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First off, Mike I'll email you tomorrow and we can figure out a time to grab lunch. So... Are you comparing the journalistic cesspool, the National Enquirer, to blogging or just saying, like blogging and news writing, the two newspapers are different? There are tabloid-ish blogs, like Valleywag. (<http://www.valleywag.com>) I just feel uncomfortable saying that one medium or form of blogging is better than the other. As you said, the various types of blogs serve different purposes. Like Brandon seemed to be comparing my style of blog writing with William Hung and an amateur golfer and that you guys are like Kelly Clarkson and Tiger Woods. I don't know if he meant it as a knock but it almost came off as one. If we do look at the circulation numbers, isn't the old media failing? People are running away from tv news and newspapers, right? When you have a generation that admits to get the majority of their news from Jon Stewart, do you have to wonder if maybe it is time to examine the effectiveness of the way that things are done? What about citizen journalism? I think citizens did a faster, better, more effective job of covering the London terrorist bombings, than the old media elite that you guys seemed to be holding on a pedestal. I would even go as far to say as the blogosphere does a better job of policing its own than the New York Times does. If you don't know what your talking about or you spew factless nothingness, you will read about how much of a fraud you are on other blogs or just no one will read you. I would be really interested in hearing what blogs you guys read. Can each of the members of the UNS team post what are a few links off of their blog reader? I think one key to being and publishing in this space is that you have to participate. I'd love to see what blogs you guys read and comment on.

6. [Mike Saffran](#)

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I definitely was only implying that the two newspapers are different, Justin. And, though I'll let Brandon speak for himself, I'm quite sure he didn't intend his analogy to come across as a knock against bloggers -- in fact, my interpretation was just the opposite. (Having said that, I golfed with Brandon during last week's on-campus miniature-golf fundraiser for the United Way -- and, come to think of it, he did bear a stunning resemblance to Tiger Woods. As for William Hung... well, let me just say I'd rather watch -- and, oh yeah, listen to -- Kelly Pickler\* :-)) I think you're right on the mark with your comment about old media -- in many cases, the business models (and bottom lines) of old media are under extreme duress (and not only newspapers and TV; radio -- my passion -- is suffering, too, due to the impact of digital media technologies such as iPods, Internet radio and, to a lesser extent so far, satellite radio, along with plain old mismanagement by big media). As for your question about other blogs, I confess I don't regularly look at too many. I have a few Web sites that I regularly poke around, but they're mostly radio-related (Arbitron, R&R, radio-info.com) to keep me up on the biz. But I think it's a great suggestion for others (not limited to UNS) to post links to blogs they wish to share. \*Lastly, I confess that was borderline "brain dump" up there. I'm not sure if it's the late hour (1:05 a.m. as I write), or if I'm being beaten into submission on this blog :-)) But, on a serious note, quality writing to me is a matter of personal pride -- even when it's less formal, like here (hey, it's my name I'm signing to it). Yes, I am writing in Word beforehand. And, yes, I am pulling for Kelly Pickler :-))

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